

Street Character. The new plan recommends a hierarchy of boulevards, avenues, and streets, each with design elements consistent with their use. Since traditional downtowns possess pedestrian-friendly streets and sidewalks, the plan also recommends design guidelines to enhance the character and quality of the downtown's rights-of-way for pedestrians. Because the majority of the downtown's streets support retail, entertainment, and community-related uses and facilities, street character is critical to creating a pleasant pedestrian ambiance. Figure 3.8 identifies street character.

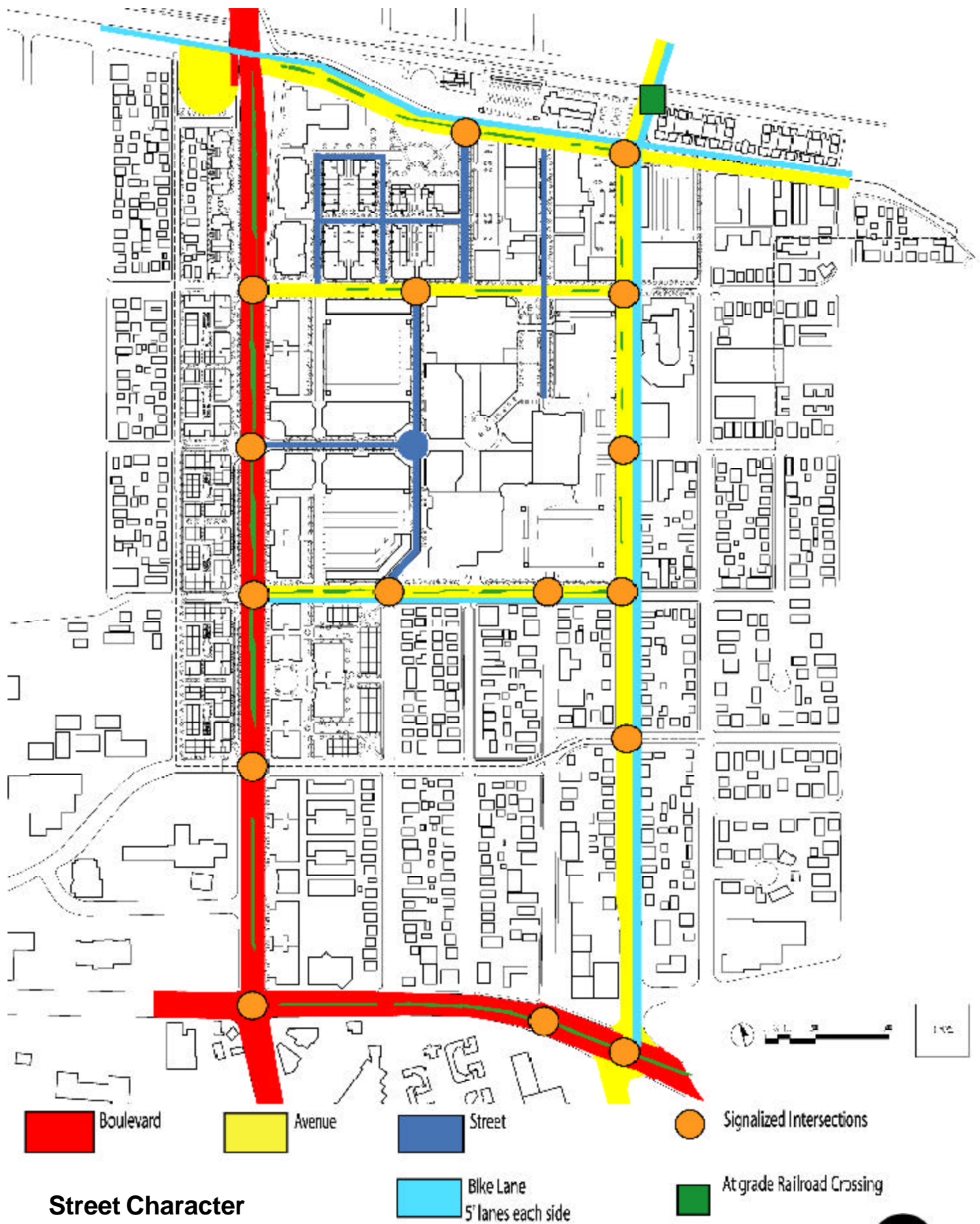
Boulevards are for regional access and accommodate the highest traffic volumes. Boulevards are designed for efficiency. Mathilda Avenue and El Camino Real are the downtown's regional boulevards. Planning and design recommendations for boulevards include planted medians; dedicated left turn lanes and little or no parallel parking to promote efficient vehicular movement; minimum 15-foot wide sidewalks planted with street trees; landscaping strips separating sidewalks from the street curb; and specially designed light poles. Recommendations focus on improving Mathilda since El Camino is outside the plan area. However, pedestrian-friendly improvements to El Camino are important, particularly between Sunnyvale and Mathilda as El Camino defines the downtown's southern boundary.

Avenues are important local arterials and generally accommodate less traffic than boulevards. Avenues connect the downtown's various districts to the regional boulevards. Evelyn Avenue, Washington Avenue, Iowa Avenue, and Sunnyvale Avenue are the downtown's avenues. Planning and design recommendations for avenues include planted medians; dedicated left turn lanes to promote efficient vehicular movement; minimum 10-foot wide sidewalks planted with street trees; and

special pedestrian scale light poles. Bike lanes are planned for Iowa, Sunnyvale, and Evelyn. Parallel parking is provided on the north side of Washington between Frances and Sunnyvale and on both sides of Iowa between Mathilda and Sunnyvale.

Streets are district-oriented and generally accommodate less traffic than avenues. Streets establish and enhance a district's character. Murphy Avenue, Frances Street, Town Center Lane and the McKinley Avenue extension are planned to be important commercial streets. Taaffe Street, Altair Way, Capella Way, and Charles Avenue are planned to be important residential streets. Aries Way is planned for both residential and commercial uses. Planning and design recommendations for streets include parallel parking; minimum 10-foot wide sidewalks planted with street trees; curb bulbouts to provide additional space for landscaping and street furniture, and to minimize pedestrian crossing distances; and special pedestrian scale light poles. Streets do not contain medians or dedicated left turn lanes. Development on retail and commercial streets is required to build to the property line. Development on residential streets is set back from the property line in the West of Mathilda district, but required to build to the property line in the North of Washington district.





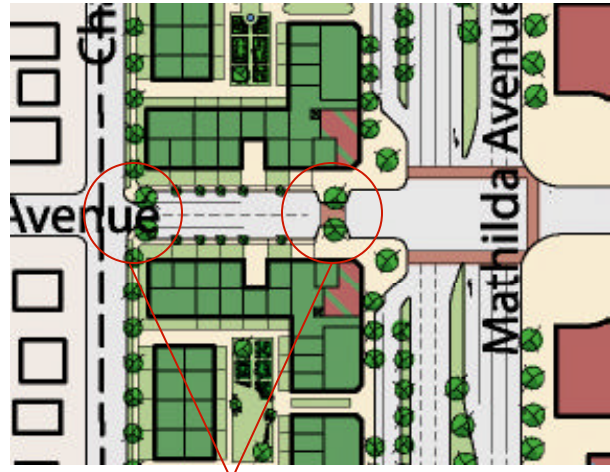
Street Character

Figure 3.8

Gateways. The new plan proposes a hierarchy of downtown and residential gateways. Downtown gateways announce arrival, and residential gateways establish boundaries. Figure 3.9 Illustrates the locations of gateways in Sunnyvale.

Downtown gateways are district markers within or near the commercial core that encourage entry into downtown districts. They are recommended at the Mathilda/Washington, Mathilda/El Camino Real, and Sunnyvale/El Camino Real intersections. A special gateway is recommended at the Mathilda/Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road intersection to announce an alternate downtown point of arrival via Sunnyvale for northbound traffic on Mathilda. Downtown gateways should invite entry, be designed for vehicular scale, and be well-lit for night time visibility.

Residential gateways are neighborhood markers that create subtle boundaries between the commercial core and downtown residential districts to protect neighborhoods from cut-through traffic and commercial parking. They are recommended at the Mathilda/Iowa, Mathilda/McKinley, and Mathilda/Washington intersections on the west side of Mathilda; the Iowa/Taaffe, Iowa/Frances, and Iowa/Murphy intersections on the south side of Iowa; the Sunnyvale/Iowa and Sunnyvale/McKinley intersections on the east side of Sunnyvale; the Washington/Carroll intersection on the east side of Carroll; and at the Sunnyvale/Caltrain railroad crossing. Residential gateways should convey a sense of limited access, for residents only. Design features could include curb bulbouts at intersection entrances and signage markers announcing neighborhood identity.



Residential gateways, such as bulb-outs are markers that create subtle boundaries between the commercial and residential areas.



A downtown gateway should invite entry, be designed for vehicular scale, and be well-lit for night time visibility.



Gateways

Figure 3.9

Connections. The new plan proposes to reconnect discontinuities in the commercial core's vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems and improve sidewalk environments in the commercial core, particularly on important streets such as Mathilda, Sunnyvale, Washington, Iowa, and Town Center Lane. Figure 3.10 illustrates a diagram of connections and gathering places downtown.

Recommendations include improving the vehicular grid in the vicinity of Town Center Mall by reestablishing roadway extensions on McKinley Avenue between Mathilda and Town Center Lane, and on Murphy Avenue between Washington Avenue and Town Center Mall, either as public rights-of-way or public/private streets. In addition, the new plan proposes public/private streets on a southerly extension of Aries, between Washington and McKinley, and McKinley and Iowa. The McKinley Avenue extension will provide access to new retail space proposed by the mall, and will improve access to the mall's western entrance. The Murphy Avenue extension will reinforce the connection between the successful businesses on Murphy and the mall's eastern entrance, and provide the opportunity to create a strong pedestrian connection between the McKinley extension and the Murphy extension through improved mall public space. The Aries extensions provide service and parking access to office developments proposed for the East of Mathilda sub-district and to public parking structures west of the mall.

The new plan recommends improving pedestrian linkages generally within the commercial core by providing pedestrian-friendly streetscape improvements, changing the emphasis from driving from destination to destination, to parking and walking from destination to destination in an enhanced environment. It should be possible to park

conveniently, walk on wide, shady sidewalks to the mall or to local businesses on Washington to shop, enjoy lunch at a restaurant on Murphy, pass some time at a fountain in the plaza next to Macy's, and walk back to the car.

Mathilda, Evelyn, Iowa, and Sunnyvale are important boundary streets. Access to most district parking resources occurs on these streets. Washington Avenue, Capella Way, McKinley Avenue, Murphy Avenue, and Town Center Lane are important district streets. The new plan recommends maintaining the existing specific plan's Street Tree Program for each of these streets. Tree species selection can vary from district to district to reinforce district identity, and will vary to accommodate design considerations such as scale of canopy, scale of street, color, shading characteristics, sun exposure, etc.

The new plan recommends small-scale stopping places along important pedestrian routes to create pedestrian interest and provide public amenities. Stopping places are proposed at the eastern side of the Mathilda/McKinley intersection to announce new large format mall shops, at the western side of the Sunnyvale/McKinley intersection to reinforce recognition of the mall's eastern entry, and at the Town Center Lane/McKinley intersection to reinforce recognition of the mall's western entry. Stopping places can be enhanced with street furniture, public art, and items of historical interest.

The new plan recommends retaining the existing specific plan's proposed bicycle lanes on Sunnyvale and Iowa but recommends moving the bicycle lanes proposed for Washington to Evelyn.





Pedestrian Connections

Figure 3.10

Public Plazas. The new plan proposes to retain the plaza (under construction as of March, 2002) fronting Evelyn Avenue in the area between the Mozart project and Frances Street, and to add a plaza west of the Murphy Avenue extension and the proposed parking structure, fronting Macy's eastern entrance.

The Evelyn plaza offers an opportunity to provide the downtown with a quiet, richly landscaped, green resource. Programmed events in the Evelyn plaza would be able to take advantage of the plaza's landscaped ambiance and its proximity to the Caltrain station.

The Murphy plaza is an opportunity to strengthen the commercial core's proposed "100% intersection" at Murphy and Washington, and enhance visibility and access to Macy's eastern entrance. The northern portion of the Murphy plaza could be the downtown's "meeting place," embellished with a fountain, shade trees, and places for sitting. The southern portion of this plaza is recommended to be an important event space, hosting the downtown's weekend market and Sunnyvale's annual gatherings. This central downtown location makes the space ideally suited for this purpose, supporting the businesses on Murphy and increasing opportunities for mall merchants. For these events, the Murphy extension, like Murphy Avenue, would be closed to traffic, increasing the plaza's width and promoting fluid pedestrian movement.





The Evelyn plaza looking southwest at housing developments north of Washington Avenue.



The Murphy plaza looking northeast at the Murphy/Washington Avenue intersection.

Land Use Comparison with the 1993 Downtown Specific Plan

The 2002 Urban Design Plan (UDP) proposes uses similar to the 1993 Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) as indicated below. Slight increases in office and retail densities are offset by the deletion of performing arts and hotel uses. Proposed increases in downtown housing support the urban design goal of promoting downtown housing opportunities, and capitalize on downtown residential population as a potential source of investment and support in the downtown.

K = 1000's of square feet.

SF = single family; LM = low medium density; MD = medium density; HD = high density.

U = dwelling unit; average housing unit size = 1000 sf.

	Residential				Office	Retail	Performing Arts	Hotel	Total (non-residential)
	SF	LM	MD	HD					
2002 UDP	20U	206U	12	2,048U	1,134K	1,348K	0	0	2,482K
1993 DSP	20U	206U	12U	1,111U	1,052K	1,212K	120K	300K	2,684K



